

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Previously presented) A vacuum cleaner comprising:
 - a nozzle unit having a nozzle,
 - an electric blower for sucking air,
 - a suction air passage provided between the nozzle unit and the electric blower, and
 - a cyclone dust collector, arranged in the suction air passage, for separating dust by making sucked air into a whirling stream, wherein the cyclone dust collector comprises:
 - a dust collection chamber for collecting dust, the dust collection chamber having an inlet port through which to introduce the sucked air,
 - a lid for selectively opening and closing the dust collection chamber, the lid comprising an exhaust port through which to discharge sucked air out of the dust collection chamber, and
 - an exhaust cylinder detachably fitted to the exhaust port of the lid,
 - a shielding member detachably fitted to a bottom end of the exhaust cylinder, wherein the shielding member closes off the bottom end of the exhaust cylinder so that air entering the exhaust cylinder enters the exhaust cylinder through a port located in a peripheral edge of the exhaust cylinder, and
 - wherein the shielding member is located above an area of the dust collecting chamber where dust is collected, and wherein the shielding member includes a plurality of elongated ribs extending downwardly from a top portion thereof for separating dust from the air in the dust collection chamber.

2. (Previously presented) A vacuum cleaner as claimed in claim 1, further comprising exhaust cylinder detecting means for detecting that the exhaust cylinder is located in a predetermined position, wherein the electric blower is controlled according to a result of detection by the exhaust cylinder detecting means.

3-8. (Canceled)

9. (Previously presented) A vacuum cleaner as claimed in claim 1, wherein the cyclone dust collector is integrally detachable from the suction passage.

10. (Previously presented) A vacuum cleaner as claimed in claim 9, further comprising dust collector detecting means for detecting that the cyclone dust collector is located in a predetermined position, wherein the electric blower is controlled according to a result of detection by the dust collector detecting means.

11-12. (Canceled)

13. (Previously presented) A vacuum cleaner as claimed in claim 1, wherein the elongated ribs are shaped like a flat plate and are arranged so as to extend radially from center to periphery.